

wyse had anye inkelynge thereof: for hee was not likelye to speake it of noughte.

But nowe to retorne to the course of this hyforye, were it that the duke of Gloucester hadde of old foreminded this conclusion, or was nowe at erfte thereunto moued, and putte in hope by the occasion of the tender age of the younge princes, his nephues (as opportunitie and lykelyhoode of speede, putteth a manne in courage of that hee neuer intended) certayn is it that hee contriued theyr destruccoon, with the vsurpacion of the regal dignitie vppon hymselfe. And for as muche as hee well wiste and holpe to mayntayn, a long continued grudge and hearte brennyng betweene the quenes kinned and the kynges blood eyther partye enuyng others authoritie, hee nowe thought that their deuision shoulde bee (as it was in dede) a fortherlye begynnynge to the pursuite of his intente, and a sure ground for the foundation of al his building yf he might firste vnder the pretext of reuengynge of olde displeasure, abuse the anger and ygnorance of the tene partie, to the destruccoon of the tother: and then wyne to his purpose as manye as he coule: and those that coule not be wonne, myght be losse ere they looked therefore. For of one thyng was hee certayne, that if his entente were perceiued, he shold foone haue made peace betwene the bothe parties, with his owne bloude.

Kynge Edward in his life, albeit that this disencion betwene hys frendes somnewhat yrked hym: yet in his good health hee somnewhat the lesse regarded it, because hee thought whatsoeuer busines shoulde falle betwene them, hymselfe shoulde alwaye bee hable to rule bothe the parties.

But in his last sicknesse, when hee receiued his naturall strengthe too fore enfebled, that hee dyspayred all recouerye, then hee consydeyng the youthe of his chyl-dren, albeit hee nothyng lesse mistrusted then that that happened, yet well forsyng that manye harmes myghte growe by theyr debate, whyle the youth of hys children shoulde lacke discrecion of themselfe and good counsaile, of their frendes, of whiche either party shold counsaile for their owne commodity and rather by pleasaunte aduise too wyne themselfe fauour, then by profitable aduertisement to do the children good, he called some of them before him that were at variaunce, and in especyall the lorde marques Dorsette the quenes sonne by her fyrste housebande, and Richarde the lorde Hastings, a noble man, than lorde chaumberlayne agayne whome the quene specially grudged, for the great fauoure the kyng bare hym, and also for that shee thoughte hym secretlye famyler with the kyng in wanton compaignie. Her kynred also bare hym fore, as well for that the kyng hadde made hym captayne of Calyce (whiche office the lorde Ryuers, brother to the quene claimed of the kynges former promyse as for diuerse other great giftes whiche hee receyued, that they looked for. When these lordes with diuerse other of bothe the parties were comme in presence, the kynge lysteinge vppon hymselfe and vnderfette with pillowes, as it is reported on this wyse sayd vnto them, My lordes, my dere kinsmenne and alies, in what plichte I lye you see, and I feele. By whiche the lesse whyle I looke to lyue with you, the more depelye am I moued to care in what case I leaue you, for such as I leaue you, suche bee my children lyke to fynde you. Whiche if they shoulde (that Godde forbydde) fynde you at variaunce, myght happe to fall themselfe at warre ere their discrecion woulde serue to sette you at peace. Ye se their youthe, of whiche I recken, the onely suretie to reste in youre concord. For it sufficeth not that al you loue them, yf eche of you hate other. If they wer menne, your faithfulnessse happelye woulde suffice. But childehood must be maintained by mens authoritie, and slipper youth vnderpropped with elder counsaile, which neither they can haue, but ye geue it, nor ye geue it, yf ye gree not. For wher eche labourerth to breake that the other maketh, and for hatred of eche of others parson, impugneth eche others counsaile, there must it nedes bee long ere anye good conclusion goe forward. And also while either partye labourerth to be chiefe, flattery shall haue more place then plaine and faithfull aduise, of whiche muste nedes ensue the euill bringyng vppon the prynces, whose mynd in tender youth

infect, shal redily fall to mischief and riot, and drawe down with this noble realme to ruine, but if grace turne him to wisdom: which if God send, then thei that by euill menes before pleased him best, shal after fall farthest out of fauour, so that euer at length euill driftes drede to nought, and good plain wayes prosper. Great variaunce hath their long bene betwene you, not alway for great causes. Sometime a thing right wel intended, our misconstruccoon turneth vnto worle or a final displeasure done vs, eyther our owne affection or euill tongues agreueth. But this wote I well ye neuer had so great cause of hatred, as ye haue of loue. I hat we be al men, that we be christen men, this shall I leaue for preachers to tel you (and yet I wote nere whither any preachers wordes ought more to moue you, then his that is by and by gooying to the place that thei all preache of.) But this shal I desire you to remember, that the one parte of you is of my bloude, the other of myne alies, and eche of yow with other, eyther of kinned or affinitie, whiche spirytual kynred of affynity, if the sacramentes of Christes churche, beare that weyght with vs that woulde Godde thei did, shoulde no lesse moue vs to charitye, then the respecte of fleshye consanguinitye. Oure Lorde forbydde, that you loue together the worse, for the felie cause that you ought to loue the better. And yet that happeneth. And no where fynde wee so deadlye debate, as amonge them, whyche by nature and lawe moste oughte to agree together. Suche a pestilente serpente is ambition and desyre of vaine glorye and foueraintie, whiche amonge states where he once entrench crepeth forth so farre, tyll with deuision and variaunce hee turneth all to mischief. Firste longing to be nexte the best, afterwarde egall with the beste, and at laste chiefe and aboue the beste. Of which immoderate appetite of woorthip, and thereby of debate and disencion what losse, what sorowe, what trouble hath within these fewe yeares growen in this realme, I praye Godde as well forgeate as wee well remember.

Whiche thynges yf I coule as well haue foreseene, as I haue with my more payne then pleasure proued, by Goddes blessed Ladie (that was euer his othe) I woulde neuer haue won the courtelye of mennes knees, with the losse of soo many heades. But sithen thynges passed cannot be gaine called, muche oughte wee the more beware, by what occasion we haue taken soo greute hurte afore, that we esteemes fall not in that occasion agayne. Nowe be those griefes passed, and all is (Godde be thanked) quiete, and likelie righte wel to prosper in wealthfull peace vnder youre colesyns my children, if Godde sende them life and you loue. Of whiche twoo thynges, the lesse losse wer they by whome thoughte Godde dydde hys pleasure, yet shoulde the realme alway fynde kynges and paradiure as good kynges. But yf you among youre selfe in a childes reygne fall at debate, many a good man shall perish and happely he to, and ye to, ere thys land fynde peace again. Wherefore in these last wordes that euer I looke to speak with you: I exhort you and require you al, for the loue that you haue euer borne to me, for the loue that I haue euer borne to you, for the loue that our Lord beareth to vs all, from this time forward, all grieues forgotten, eche of you loue other. Whiche I verely truste you will, if ye any thing earthly regard, either Godde or your king, affinitie or kinned, this realme, your owne countrey, or your owne surety. And therewithal the king no longer enduring to sitte vp, laide him down on his right side, his face towardes them: and none was there present that coule refrain from weping. But the lordes recomforting him with as good wordes as they coule, and answering for the time as thei thought to stand with his pleasure, there in his presence (as by their wordes appered ech forgave other, and ioyned their hands together, when (as it after appeared by their dedes) their hearts wer far a sonder. As sone as the king was departed, the noble prince his sonne drew toward London, which at the time of his decease, kept his household at Ludlow in Wales. Whiche countrey being far of from the law and recourse to iustice, was begon to be farre oute of good wyll and waxen wild, robbers and riuers walking at libertie vncorrected. And for this encheason

the prince was in the life of his father sente thither, to the end that the authoritie of his presence, shoulde refraine euill disposed parsons fro the boldnes of their former outrages, to the gouernance and ordering of this yong prince at his sending thither, was there appointed Sir Antony Wodville lord Riuers and brother vnto the quene, a right honourable man, as valiaunte of hande as politike in counsaile. Adioyned wer there vnto him other of the same partie, and in effect every one as he was neresst of kin vnto the quene, so was planted next about the prince. That drifte by the quene not vnwisly deuised, whereby her bloude mighte of youth be rooted in the princes fauor, the duke of Gloucester turned vnto their destruccoon, and vpon that grounde set the foundation of all his vnhappy building. For whom soeuer he perceiued, either at variaunce with them, or bearing himselfe their fauor, hee brake vnto them, some by mouth, som by writing and secret messengers, that it neyther was reason nor in any wise to be suffered, that the yong king their master and kinsmanne, shoulde bee in the handes and custodye of his mothers kinned, sequestred in maner from their compaignie and attendance, of which euery one ought him as faithful seruice as they, and manye of them far more honorable part of kin then his mothers side: whose blood (quod he) sauing the kynges pleasure, was ful vnmetely to be matched with his: whiche nowe to be, as who say removed from the kyng, and the lesse noble to be left aboute him, is (quod he) neither honorable to hys majestie, nor vnto vs, and also to his grace no surety to haue the mightiest of his frendes from him, and vnto vs no little iopardy, to suffer our welproued euill willers, to grow in ouerget authoritie with the prince in youth, namely which is lighte of beliefe and sone perswaded. Ye remember I trow king Edward himselfe, albeit he was a manne of age and of discrecion, yet was he in manye thynges ruled by the bende, more then stode either with his honour, or our profite, or with the commoditye of any manne els, except onely the immoderate aduancement of them selfe. Whiche whither they hard thirsted after their owne weale, or our woe, it wer hard I wene to gesse. And if some folkes frendship had not holden better place with the king, then any respect of kinned, thei might peraduenture easily haue beene trapped and brought to confusion somme of vs ere this. Why not as easily as they haue done some other alreadye, as neere of his royal bloude as we. But our Lord hath wrought his wil, and thanke be to his grace that perill is paste. Howe be it as great is growing, yf wee suffer this yonge kyng in oure enemyes hande, whiche without his wytyng, might abuse the name of his commaundement, to ani of our vndoing, which thyng God and good prouision forbyd. Of which good prouision none of us hath any thing the lesse nede, for the late made attonement, in whiche the kynges pleasure hadde more place then the parties willes. Nor none of vs I beleue is so vnwyse, ouerfone to truste a newe frende made of an olde foe, or to think that an hourly kindnes, sodainely contract in one houre continued, yet scant a fortnight, shold be deper fetled in their stomackes: then a long accustomed malice many yeres rooted.

With these wordes and wrytynges and suche other, the duke of Gloucester sone set a fyre, them that were of themselfe ethe to kinde, and in especiall twayne, Edward duke of Buckingham, and Richarde lorde Hastings and chaumberlayn, both men of honour and of great power. The tone by longe succession from his ancestrie, the tother by his office and the kynges fauor. These two not bearing eche to other so muche loue, as hatred bothe vnto the quenes parte: in this poynte accorded together wyth the duke of Gloucester, that they wolde vterlye amoue fro the kynges compaignie, all his mothers frendes, vnder the name of their enemyes. Vpon this concluded, the duke of Gloucester vnderstandyng, that the lordes whiche at that tyme were aboute the kyng, intended to bryng him vppon to his coronacion, accompanied with suche power of their frendes, that it shoulde bee harde for hym to bryng his purpose to passe, without the gathering and great assemble of people and in maner of open warre, whercof

the ende he wiste was doubtuous, and in which the kyng being on their side, his part shoulde haue the face and name of a rebellion: he secretlye therefore by diuers meanes, caused the quene to be perswaded and brought in the mynd, that it neither wer nede, and also shold be iopardous, the king to come vp strong. For wheras nowe every lorde loued other, and none other thing studyed vppon, but aboute the coronacion and honoure of the king: if the lordes of her kinned shold assemble in the kynges name muche people, thei shoulde geue the lordes atwixe whome and them hadde bene sommetyme debate, to feare and suspecte, lest they shoulde gather thys people, not for the kynges sauegarde whome no manne enpugned, but for their destruccoon, hauyng more regarde to their olde variaunce, then their newe attonement. For whiche cause thei shoulde assemble on the other partie muche people agayne for their defence, whose power the wyfte wel farre stretched. And thus shoulde all the realme fall on a rore. And of al the hurte that therof shoulde ensue, which was likely not to be litle, and the most harme there like to fall wher she left would, all the worlde woulde put her and her kinned in the wyght, and say that thei had vnwyselye and vntrewlye alto, broken the amitie and peace that the kyng her husband so prudentelye made, betwene hys kinne and hers in his death bed, and whiche the other party faithfully obserued.

The quene being in this wise perswaded, suche woordes sente vnto her sonne, and vnto her brother being aboute the kyng, and ouer that the duke of Gloucester hymselfe and other lordes, the chiefe of hys bende, wrote vnto the kynges soo reuerentelye, and to the quenes frendes, there soo louyngelye, that they nothyng earthe-lye mystrustyng, broughte the kynges vppe in greute hatte, not in good speede, with a sober compaignie. Nowe was the king in his waye to London gone, from Northampton, when these dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham came thither. Where remained behynd, the lorde Ryuers the kynges vnle, entending on the morowe to folow the kyng, and bee with hym at Stonye Stratford miles thence, earely or bee departed. So was there made that nyghte muche friendly chere betwene these dukes and the lorde Riuers a greute while. But incontynente after that they were oppenlye with greute courtelye departed, and the lorde Riuers lodged, the dukes secretlye with a fewe of their moste priue frendes, sette them downe in counsaile, wherin they spent a great parte of the nyght. And at their risinge in the dawnyng of the day, thei sent about priuily to their seruantes in their innes and lodgynges about, geuinge them commaundement to make them selfe shortlye readye, for their lordes wer to horsebackward. Vppon whiche messages, manye of their folke were attendaunt, when manye of the lorde Riuers seruantes were vnreadye. Nowe hadde these dukes taken also into their custodye the kayes of the inne, that none shoulde passe forth without theyr licence.

And ouer this in the hyghe waye towardes Stonye Stratford where the kyng laye, they hadde beestowed certayne of theyr folke, that shoulde sende backe agayne, and compell to retourne, anye manne that were gotten oute of Northampton toward Stonye Stratford, tyll they shoulde geue other lycence. For as muche as the dukes themselfe intended for the shewe of their dylygence, to bee the fyrste that shoulde that daye attende vppon the kynges highnesse oute of that towne: thus bare they folke in hande. But when the lorde Ryuers vnderstode the gates closed, and the wayes on euerye side besette, neyther hys seruantes nor hymselfe suffered to go oute, perceiuyng well so greute a thyng without his knowledge not begun for noughte, comparing this maner present with this last nightes chere, in so few houres to gret a change marueylouslye misliked. How be it fitte hee coule not geat awaye, and keepe hymselfe close, hee woulde not, lest he shoulde seeme to hyde hymselfe for some secret feare of hys owne faulte, whereof he saw no such cause in hymself: he determined vppon the suretie of his own conscience, to goe boldlye to them, and inquire what thys matter myghte meane. Whome as soone as they sawe, they beganne to quarrell with hym, and saye, that hee intended to sette distaunce betwene